



# Life sentence handed down in Rengel case

By MONIQUE PLESSAS

Stefanie Rengel's family waited 18 months for justice — and it finally came on Monday, with the sentencing of the young man who stabbed her to death.

David Bagshaw, who was just four days away from turning 18 when he murdered Rengel outside her East York home, was sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole for 10 years.

He received the maximum time a youth offender can receive when sentenced as an adult.

Bagshaw stabbed his 14-year-old victim six times and left her to die in a snowbank near Denvale Road and Northdale Boulevard on Jan. 1, 2008.

The “mastermind” behind the murder, 17-year-old Melissa Todorovic, driven by an obsessive jealousy, relentlessly pressured her then-boyfriend, Bagshaw, to murder Rengel, who Todorovic perceived as a romantic rival. Todorovic was sentenced in July.

Both Todorovic and Bagshaw

were convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced as adults.

Todorovic, however, needs to wait only seven years in contrast with Bagshaw's 10, because she was under 16 at the time of the murder.

Rengel's younger brother, Ian, acted as the family spokesperson outside the downtown Toronto courthouse on Monday and expressed relief that this part of the tragedy is over. But he also indicated discontent that Bagshaw did not receive the sentence of 25 years without possibility of parole that he would have, if he was just four days older at the time of the murder.

Bagshaw's future is still in the hands of the court, as he waits for his placement hearing — where it will be determined whether he serves his time in a youth or an adult facility.



BAGSHAW



Observer, Jessicka Loduca

**FRIENDS FUR-EVER:** Tabitha Star, 19, and four-legged friend Sonik cozy up together at the Toronto Police Dog Services anniversary event on Saturday.

# Canine cops capture hearts during unit's 20th-year bash

By JESSICKA LODUCA

A dog really is a man's best friend.

When the Toronto Police Dog Services Unit (PDS) first opened its doors in 1989, it began with only one dog, which was purchased for one dollar. After seeing the successes achieved within the first year, the police service expanded the unit to eight dogs and nine handlers. Today, the unit is comprised of 27 dogs with 20 handlers, making it the largest municipal canine unit in Canada.

The PDS celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sept. 26 with an open house at its Beechwood Drive location in East York, giving the public the opportunity to meet with handlers and their dogs.

The event included face painting, tours of the station and demonstrations, where the dogs showcased their skills.

Sgt. James Adamson has worked with his partner Sonik, a six-year-old German shepherd, for the past four years and says at the end of the day the dogs are not only part of the force, but part of their families as well.

“Each dog is bonded to a handler and is at his side all the time,” Adamson said. “When I go to work, Sonik comes to work. To him, it's always fun and it's always playtime. We're not actually out doing anything aggressive. The dog is of the

**To him, it's always fun and it's always playtime.'**

—Sgt. James Adamson

mindset that the suspect is in possession of his toy; it's a very simple concept.”

Dogs in the force are selected based on their confidence, sociability and prey drive.

They are required to stand their ground, but must still display a friendly side so they are capable of doing demonstrations for the public.

Sgt. Paul Caissie and his dog Indy, a springer spaniel, both took place in a demonstration at this month's event.

“The dogs are very proficient in what they do,” Caissie said. “They save man-hours for many of the field command officers.

They don't have to deploy their officers to do a search.”

Anders Robinson, 24, a guest at the PDS event, said events like these are beneficial to the community because handlers and their dogs are seen sporadically in public.

“They (the PDS) are a small group of people,” he said. “It's nice being able to come in here and get up close and personal with the officers and their dogs and see what they are all about.”

The dogs are required to partake in a 15-week course prior to ever setting foot on a crime scene. During this time, they are trained in narcotic detection, cadaver work and firearm detection. German and Dutch shepherds are used as general purpose dogs, while Labradors and springer spaniels are used in detection work such as finding narcotics and explosives.

“The dogs are expected to achieve a standard,” Adamson said. “Once they have made that achievement they must annually repeat the course and meet that standard again.”

See WHO, page 8



Observer, Victoria Wells

**FOR THE BIRDS:** Matigan Crozier, 6, creates an eco-friendly bird feeder from a pinecone, lard and seed. It was one of many activities available at TVO Kids' Greenbelt Adventure Day, held at the Evergreen Brick Works farmers' market on Sept. 19. (Another photo on page 6.)

# East York councillors surprised by Miller's decision

By VICTORIA WELLS

David Miller's announcement that he won't be seeking a third term as mayor of Toronto came as a shock to two East York city councillors.

Councillors Janet Davis of Ward 31/Beaches-East York and John Parker of Ward 26/Don Valley West both expressed surprise at the mayor's decision. “Everything had indicated

that the mayor was looking forward to a fight (in 2010) and had no sign of (him) backing out,” Parker said. “I was completely and totally surprised.”

Davis, who serves on the executive committee, said she was saddened by the mayor's decision.

“I'm disappointed,” she said. “There are other challenges ahead that I know he would

have tackled.”

Councillor Case Ootes of Ward 29 Toronto-Danforth was out of town and unavailable for comment.

Miller announced his decision at an emotional news conference last Friday. In his speech, he



DAVIS

said he felt he had accomplished what he had set out to do as mayor of the city and wanted to spend more time with his wife and children.

Davis said she could relate to Miller's desire to put his family first.

“I usually see my family for breakfast and on the weekend. Most evenings I'm out,” she said. “People don't realize the effect

political life has on family. It takes an incredible toll.”

But not everyone believes the mayor's decision is based on family commitments alone. Parker said he thinks there's more to it than that.

“I don't buy his publicly stated rationale that he just now stumbled upon the fact that he is the father of two children.”

See RIGHT, page 2

# Doctors use SARS to fight flu

## Lessons from outbreak fuel H1N1 strategy

By MIKE CRISOLAGO

This flu season, with the threat of an H1N1 pandemic looming, staff at Toronto East General Hospital can thank an unlikely ally in the fight to keep the hospital safe from the spread of infectious disease: SARS.

Dr. James Downey, Toronto East General Hospital's (TEGH) infection control officer and the man in charge of the hospital's infection control response program, said that lessons learned from the SARS outbreak in 2003 make hospitals in Toronto some of the best-prepared in the country to combat a possible pandemic.

"(SARS) changed the way infection control in hospitals was done, at least in Ontario," Downey said. "We learned a

lot from that in terms of how to put in place various types of responses that you may need in certain situations."

Memories of the SARS crisis, which Downey called "the hardest work I ever did," helped provide the impetus for earlier planning this time around.

"Ever since April, we've had weekly meetings of senior staff in all different departments, just to make sure we've thought of everything and to be sure that our response is appropriate and aggressive enough," he said.

The response begins with screening people outside the hospital, a process that differs slightly from the SARS outbreak, when nurses screened people inside the hospital.

"This type of strategy allows us to identify people before they come in the door," Downey said. "Then, if they are at risk of a respiratory illness that they can spread, they get put into a special cough room, which is a high-ventilated room, to make

sure their symptoms are not spread to other people."

Downey said all hospital staff receive constant reminders to self-screen and to not come to work if they show any flu-like symptoms.

Cleaning the hospital becomes even more vital, and hand-washing facilities and flu prevention information appear throughout the building.

Tracy Robbins, a registered nurse who supervises the Respiratory and Patient Medical Unit and the Progressive Waiting Centre at TEGH, said the hospital takes no chances when dealing with infectious diseases.

"Here at East General our infection control practices are very strict all through the hospital, regardless of the fact if it's a contact or airborne (infection)," she said.

As well, Robbins said that working through SARS helped her staff develop ways to better handle the most serious cases of infectious disease that come

through the hospital.

"They learned a lot in terms of response and infection control and how to put things in place to increase the efficiency and to decrease the risk of contagion based on whatever pathogens that we're dealing with," she said.

"A lot of hard lessons were learned during SARS."

Whether the H1N1 threat amounts to an outbreak of SARS-like proportions remains to be seen. But one thing's for sure -- whatever happens, TEGH's infection control staff will be taking notes.

"This is the first pandemic flu that's happened since 1968 (and) we've already got quite a bit of knowledge about how to manage an outbreak like this," Downey said.

"And if there's another pandemic in five or 10 years we're going to be better prepared for that one than this one just because we'll have learned a whole lot (more) from this one."

## Police beat

### Man assaulted

On Monday, a 25-year-old man was assaulted in the area of Hanna Road and Parkhurst Boulevard.

The victim told police that two men got out of a vehicle, approached him, demanded the contents of his pockets, and sprayed mace into his face. The victim fell to the ground and was then punched in the body.

Police describe one of them as a male, 20 years old, 5'10", with short brown hair and a thin build. The other is a white male with the same height and build.

### Store held up

On Sept. 20, three robbers wearing disguises entered B and D Variety Store at 70 Doncaster Ave., held the owner, 52, at gunpoint and demanded cash.

One of the robbers was carrying a shotgun, but after the owner refused to give the suspects cash, they grabbed several trays of lighters and fled the store.

Police are describing the first robber as a black male, 16-18 years old with a medium build. The second is described as a black male, 6'4", with a thin build, and the third is described as a black male, 5'10", with a medium build.

### Teens mugged

Two boys, aged 13 and 14, told police they were mugged in the area of Lumsden and Woodbine avenues on Sept. 15.

They were approached by three male teens wearing disguises. One of the victims was punched by the first mugger, who wanted his backpack.

The second robber took the other victim's skateboard as the third mugger acted as lookout.

Police describe the first mugger as a white male, 5'6"-5'11", 15-17 years old, with a heavy build. The second and third robbers are also white males, around the same age and height as the first, but they have thin to medium builds and short black hair.

—Gordon Brunt

# Tensions rising over 'excessive' electricity costs

By SEAN SILLERS

Angry tenants from 2 Secord Ave. gathered to deliver letters of protest over what they say are excessive electricity costs to their landlord, The Preston Group, on Tuesday.

Tension over electricity costs in the high-rise apartment building arose following the introduction last year of sub-metered billing.

Under the plan, separate electricity meters were placed in several units of the building in an effort to bill each tenant based on their individual electricity use.

At the time of installation, tenants were given the choice to opt out of the plan if they wished to continue paying a monthly rent that would include the cost of utilities.

But tenants who agreed to the plan in exchange for lower monthly rent found their electricity bills and new rent, when combined, exceeded what they had paid under the all-inclusive arrangement — by a substantial amount.

Following tenant complaints, on Aug. 13, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) ruled the sub-metering plans null and void, due mainly to what it said was a lack of tenants' informed consent.

Ward 31 councillor (Beaches-East York) Janet Davis has been championing the tenants' position.

"The landlords have downloaded their energy costs

to the tenants," she said.

According to the OEB report, no consideration was given to the efficiency of appliances that were supplied to tenants by the landlord. Nor were the units' insulation levels considered. Because tenants have no control over these factors, the board ruled the sub-meter billing arrangement unfair.

Davis described some of the complaints she has heard from tenants.

"Snow comes in under the doors. They have electric heat at 2 Secord; some tenants have had to turn off their thermostats," due to the cost, she said.

Providing the sub-meter option to landlords was a provincial attempt to reduce overall energy consumption. Davis believes this may have backfired.

The Preston Group, the company that owns and manages the building, said through a spokesperson that "in light of the August ruling, we will have to reassess the situation with tenants."

The OEB report concluded that all sub-meter agreements have to be renegotiated based on several criteria.

All tenants must be given the opportunity for informed consent based on an independent energy audit.

The audit should disclose the proportion of Energy Star appliances in each unit and assess energy loss due to poor insulation.



Observer, Farrah Cole

**THIS ONE'S FOR TRUE:** East York Historical Society members Marilyn Clark, left, and Joyce Crook, right, attend Tuesday's unveiling of a plaque honouring Jean Gertrude "True" Davidson at the park named after her, located near the corner of Coxwell and Memorial Park avenues. Davidson had a colourful political career in East York during the 1950s and '60s, including years as the former borough's mayor. She died in 1978.

# Right and left come together as Miller bows out

Cont'd. from page 1

"I think that's a bit of window dressing to try and conceal another reality — being the drastic loss of support, which I'm assuming translates into a loss of financial support."

Parker said as Miller's approval ratings plummeted following public outcry over tax increases and the summer strike, promised funds needed to run a campaign may have been withdrawn.

That could have been a driving force behind the mayor's decision, Parker noted. Still, he said he was sympathetic toward Miller.

"He clearly loves his job," Parker said. "He worked hard

at it and he's still working hard at it."

With 14 months left in the mayor's term, Davis said Miller has time to do more. She added he will have left a legacy behind with achievements in environ-

mental programs, waste diversion and greater investment in the TTC.

"David Miller has brought tremendous intelligence and integrity to the office of mayor in the City of Toronto," Davis said.

—Will Senn

# Families of schizophrenics seek community's support

By OMAR MOSLEH

When Bjorn Harper's daughter Ingrid first started behaving strangely, he wondered why.

Then things got worse.

"We knew something was wrong, but we had no idea it was mental illness," he said.

Ingrid was eventually diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. And there was little that could have prepared Harper or his family for it.

"It comes out of the blue, with no warning," he said. "It's a pretty traumatic diagnosis, because it's a chronic illness, and it doesn't go away. It can be managed, but it can't be cured."

It began with Ingrid's suspicions about her family, her accusations that they were plotting against her and her claims that the household was going to be attacked.

When Ingrid fell deeper into the grips of psychosis and began to show severe paranoia, Harper consulted a psychiatrist who referred him to the East York chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario (SSO). He was introduced to the "Caring and Sharing" program, a weekly discussion on schizophrenia, where he got advice from members on how to get additional help.

When Ingrid wouldn't acknowledge her illness and refused assistance, Harper decided to file a "Form Two" under the Ontario Mental Health Act, which authorizes police to take a person to a physician for examination. The physician can then order the patient to a psychiatric facility for a mental health assessment.

"It's the hardest thing you can do, from a psychological point of view," Harper said. "You don't want to do it, but you have to."

Ingrid, now 36, is doing much better, thanks to treatment. For Harper, having the support of the East York SSO chapter played a tremendous role in helping him and his family get through a traumatic period.

Today, Harper serves as the president of the chapter, which celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sept. 15.

"If it hadn't been for this chapter and the help that I had, I don't know what I would have done," he said. "Hopefully I can help some people the same way that I was helped."

Ruth Malloy has been with the SSO's East York chapter for almost its entirety, and was the first facilitator of the Caring and Sharing program. She has three children with schizophrenia, Phil, Helen, and Ruth. She said it was during one of Helen's severe psychotic episodes that she decided to get into community advocacy.

Malloy said that during one episode, her daughter was refused admission to Sunnybrook hospital because there were not enough beds available.

"For there to be no beds available for an emergency for someone as sick as my daughter was, that's when I decided to go public," she said. "I said that someone has to do this."

The experience inspired her to get the issue out to the media, but she didn't get the results she wanted.

"I phoned the newspaper, and they printed the story a couple days later on the back page of the sports section," Malloy said. "If they would have refused a

cancer patient, I bet it would have been on the front page."

As a result, Malloy decided to raise awareness of the illness herself. She approached Michael Prue, then mayor of the Borough of East York, and asked him what he knew about schizophrenia. He admitted he didn't know much, so he attended the Caring and Sharing sessions and has been an avid supporter since.

Now the MPP for Beaches-East York, Prue attended the chapter's 20th anniversary observance at Toronto East General Hospital.

"I'm here to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for the great job you've done," he said.

Others, such as Laura Tong, a long-time member of the East York chapter and organizer of the 20th anniversary event, had their own poignant stories and advice based on experience.

"You can't change what you don't acknowledge," Tong said. "And if you don't acknowledge mental illness in your family, it will never change."



Observer, Rahul Gupta

**WALKING THE WALK:** The Danforth Music Hall hosted the North American debut of the Global Poverty Project's live presentation on global poverty, 1.4 Billion Reasons.

## 1.4 billion reasons to make poverty history

By RAHUL GUPTA

As he watched An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore's treatise on climate change, in a Melbourne movie theatre, Hugh Evans had an epiphany.

"I thought to myself, how good would it be if we could do something similar on global poverty?" the 26-year-old activist said of the inspiration for his one-man travelling multimedia presentation, 1.4 Billion Reasons.

Evans' live interaction at the Danforth Music Hall on Sept. 11 marked the first time a North American audience had heard the Global Poverty Project founder's plea for action on extreme global poverty.

"There is no excuse to say that (poverty) is part of the natural state of things," Evans told the crowd of almost 1,000 Centennial College students, faculty members and community activists. "Extreme poverty is the slavery of our generation."

The college sponsored the event in partnership with producer Chris Adams and Australian megastar Hugh Jackman.

Adams praised the college for its enthusiastic backing of the presentation. Students and staff, mainly from the East York campus, helped pack the theatre.

"This day could not have happened without the support of the staff and faculty," he said in his introductory remarks.

For over 90 minutes, Evans imparted the findings from

his research on global poverty. He employed slick charts and graphics, as well as his own considerable charisma, to hammer the message home that global poverty can be eradicated in less than a generation's time.

Evans is hardly a newcomer to poverty activism. At the age of 14, he travelled to Manila in the Philippines to witness poverty firsthand. In 2006, he helped organize the Make Poverty History concert in Melbourne.

After conceiving the idea for a travelling presentation, Evans pitched the UN director of human development, as well as his mentor, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, and was rewarded for his efforts with \$50,000 in funding.

The money went mostly into research. Evans hired 15 post-graduate students from around the world to act as his research team.

"You can't present something as sensitive as extreme poverty in a public forum and not do it well," he said. "You have to get the stats right. You have to get your analysis right."

Evans called on ordinary Canadians to speak out and pressure the federal government into providing more global aid to impoverished countries.

"Currently, Canada gives less than 0.3 per cent of its gross national income to the world's poor per annum," he said. "As one of the leading nations, Canada should be doing more."



Observer, Omar Mosleh

**CUT THE CAKE:** Bjorn Harper, president of the East York chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, cuts the cake as member Ruth Malloy looks on. The chapter celebrated its 20th anniversary on Sept. 15.

## Red carpet rolls out for Oscar-winning producer



Observer, Lloyd Quansah

**HOLLYWOOD MEETS EAST YORK:** Producer Chris Adams recently spoke to students at Centennial College's East York campus about his experiences in the filmmaking industry.

By LLOYD QUANSAH

Chris Adams has worn many hats in his life — poetry teacher, screenwriter, journalist and film industry journeyman — but it wasn't until recently that he found his creative spark.

"I'm 42 and I think my voice showed up about a year and a half ago," he said. "But all along the way you just keep gathering because you've got to try."

Adams, a Hollywood film producer, visited Centennial College's East York campus on Sept. 10 for a short question and answer session with students. He was there to promote a presentation called *1.4 Billion Reasons*, Australian activist Hugh Evans' effort to end extreme poverty around the world.

Adams used his own experiences to illustrate the need for students to stick to their dreams

in terms of future careers. One member of the audience, who hopes to be a journalist, asked if he should compromise and take a job as a photo editor because that position is available and his dream job isn't.

"Hell, no," Adams replied. "Be a stringer. Guess what's going to happen. You're gonna end up running the photo editorial department and you're gonna be pissed off... and you're trapped. You're in prison. You are in a prison of your own making."

Adams is so averse to the idea of buttonholing oneself that he refuses to give himself a job title.

"What do I do for a living? I execute," he said. "That's what I do for a living. I do things. I get things done."

Adams' film credits include *Syriana*, *Good Night and Good Luck* (both starring George

Clooney) and *An Inconvenient Truth* featuring former U.S. vice-president and environmentalist Al Gore.

When he decided to leave his post at Participant Productions, the company that co-produced the films, Adams thought his credentials and skills would be enough to get him another job. But the same month he became a father and an Academy Award winner, he found himself struggling to find work.

"So on a Sunday I'm an Academy Award winner, on a Monday I'm a loser," he said. "My talent hasn't changed."

The day after visiting Centennial, Adams participated in the launching of *1.4 Billion Reasons*, a global anti-poverty presentation, before a crowd of students, teachers and activists at the Danforth Music Hall.

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## Toronto cyclists need a good head on their shoulders

Michael Walker, a conservative member of Toronto city council, has in recent days voiced his support for a proposed law that would make it mandatory for all cyclists to sport not only a helmet, but also a cycling licence.

A popular argument among cyclists opposed to the proposal is that helmets do little to protect cyclists from possible harm. Certainly, a helmet is no match for a speeding car. The same could be said for motorcyclists, however, and they are not only required by law to wear a helmet, they need to obtain a proper licence to be on the road.

Toronto is one of Canada's most densely populated cities, complete with infamously bad traffic and its share of aggressive drivers. Why is it, then, that in a metropolitan city such as Toronto, the most vulnerable people on the roads are those without licences? Across Canada, making room for cyclists on our city streets is a constant battle. In an effort to make for a more harmonious environment, bicycle lanes have been created on major streets and some are even found in residential areas.

During a Toronto Cycling Advisory Committee meeting earlier this year, the committee requested that the Toronto and East York community councils consider the feasibility of reducing the speed limits along Broadview and Danforth avenues — to increase the safety for those using the bike lanes. Just to the southwest of us, the committee discussed the possibility of rearranging parking along Dundas Street East, from Broadview Avenue to River Street, to better protect those on bikes.

With the availability of bike lanes and the constant signage reminding those in cars to keep watch for cyclists, should the same onus of responsibility not be thrust upon those on two wheels?

In a sincere effort to achieve equal rights on the roads, there should no doubt be stricter efforts to see that cyclists obey certain restrictions and safety measures: stopping fully at stop signs, observing the flow of one-way streets and not weaving in and out of traffic, to name but a few. And what better way to ensure those cyclists are aware of such regulations than to test them? And what better way to ensure all registered cyclists have been tested than to give them a certificate, or licence?

—Jenna Conter

## TIFF dominates the spotlight while the real news gets lost

Monday, Sept. 14 was a busy day for the daily press in Toronto, as our newspapers brought us up to date on the events of the weekend. Among the top newsmakers: Oprah Winfrey and Patrick Lormand.

On Sunday, Winfrey emerged from a car, walked along a carpet, smiled and waved at fans and entered a theatre. For this, she received a large photo, headline and the accolade "Celebrity of the day."

That same day, half a world away, Pte Lormand was killed, the 130<sup>th</sup> Canadian soldier to fall in the Afghan theatre. His story was told deep inside the papers, with very minimal front-page intrusion.

For 50 weeks a year, the citizens of Toronto are a well-informed group of people. The plethora of news outlets sees to it that municipal issues, international news and provincial and federal political wrangling are covered in great detail.

However, for 10 days in September, the silly season descends on Toronto as headlines, front pages and television reports are filled with stories of decadence, back-slapping and self-congratulation. The juggernaut that is the Toronto International Film Festival rolls in, through and out of town... and manages to lower the brow of the mass

Steve

Darley



media along the way.

A series of seemingly identical photographs hit the front pages from Sept. 10-19. The lead role in the photos changed on a daily basis but the scene certainly did not. Sadly interesting? Possibly. Newsworthy? Probably not.

Navigating through the newspapers throughout the event revealed myriad articles covering TIFF from every conceivable angle. TIFF generates huge revenues for the city each year and there is no question that an event of this size is newsworthy. However, there comes a point where the information presented is excessive and no longer news.

The hospitality industry, particularly in Yorkville and environs, benefits more than most from TIFF each year. As such, it was encouraging to see at least one paper scratch through the surface of TIFF and provide insight into the lives of a few ordinary, working Torontonians. A Toronto Star article about the head concierge at the Four Seasons hotel was both informed and interesting. The worker's view on TIFF was

refreshing and put the festival into perspective. In many ways, it was the journalistic high point of the festival.

Unfortunately, the low point was recreated daily. The voyeuristic insight into the parties, nightclubs and Bacchanalian excess was neither tasty nor titillating. Instead readers were treated to bullet-point lists including the price of champagne, seating arrangements, air kisses and the always edifying dress designers.

Culinary minutiae were also explored — as one-bite canapés generated paragraphs of prose. It is one thing to wax lyrical in restaurant reviews and food columns, but entirely another to provide graphic detail of an exclusive little snack. The difference? The reader has the opportunity to go to said reviewed restaurant, while for the most part he or she has no chance of experiencing one bite canapé heaven.

Entertainment, escapism and the trappings of celebrity are all part of our society. They have a part to play in the psyche of individuals. They play a supporting role in our lives and that should continue in our coverage of them. The film festival is an important time in Toronto's calendar. But it is important to remember life and news don't begin and end at the corner of Avenue and Bloor.

## Apples and oranges, not lemons

I'm beginning to wonder if that tired old stereotype of the used car salesman doesn't hold some truth. After all, phrases such as 'I wouldn't buy a used car from that guy' must have sprung from somewhere, right? Right.

A couple of weeks ago, I devoted an entire weekend to researching articles, pouring over online and print ads and setting up times and locations to view and test-drive used cars.

My first stop was at a used car lot in north Toronto. I'd called ahead before leaving to confirm the details in the ad and to inquire about directions. The dealer's partner greeted me and I asked to look at the car I'd called about earlier. Seeming confused, he called his "partner" for further details. Following a brief chat he re-holstered his cellphone and said, "It's sold,

Sean

Sillers



this morning, I think."

I could have sworn I was told, just an hour before, that the car was there, waiting to be seen. I "must've been mistaken," I was told as the man tried to lure me into looking at newer, more expensive alternatives to the phantom vehicle. The old bait-and-switch.

The next day I arranged to look at a similar vehicle in the same part of town. Again I had called ahead, this time emphasizing that I was only interested in the vehicle advertised — and I was assured it was on the lot and ready to go. I saw the car as I

pulled into the lot. It sat against a chain link fence, blocked in by half a dozen cars in varying degrees of decay. I knew right away I'd wasted more time and effort, but figured I might as well try the car, if only to justify the trip.

But the car could best be described as comfortable shelter for a family of raccoons. It wouldn't even start. I foolishly agreed to try jump-starting the battery, only to discover that it wouldn't hold a charge. I left the lot, determined to view only privately sold cars.

After over a week of searching, I settled on a nice, reliable automobile, formerly driven by a 92-year-old gentleman. No, I'm not quoting an ad or a salesman's come-on. I met the man, and bought his car. A happy ending, after a trial-by-used-car-fire.

## Don't turn a blind eye to disabled pedestrians in East York

A blind man stands at the light on the corner of Pape and Cosburn avenues in the middle of a busy weekday afternoon. He cries out to passers-by: "Who will help me cross the street?" Unfortunately, the roar of rush-hour traffic drowns out his question.

In a big Canadian city, it's reasonable to expect that there will be services in place to aid the visually-impaired in going about their daily lives. And, in Toronto, there are. But if this man has to yell out to complete strangers to accompany him across a busy street, there are dangerous gaps in the infrastructure.

According to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), accessible pedestrian

signals are going up in dribs and drabs — but they are hardly the panacea of protection for those who suffer from loss of sight. These "accessible" signals vary from a chirping sound or the toll of a bell to a vibrating arrow on a telephone poll. However, there is still no universal system to help the blind safely cross the street.)

The CNIB on Bayview Avenue still receives complaints from the blind in East York and elsewhere who will hear an audible signal and begin to step out onto the road — before being pulled out of harm's way by a Good Samaritan protecting them from drivers trying to sneak around the corner.

Specialist training is also

offered by the CNIB to help the blind learn how to listen to traffic signals and patterns. But when a person goes into unfamiliar territory, they are at a much greater risk of injury... or worse.

Meanwhile, representatives

of Mayor Miller's office say that while traffic lights equipped with the chirping sounds are being added to Toronto's streets, alternatives are also being sought — because some neighbourhood residents consider the chirps a nuisance

late at night.

It is alarming, considering the technology we have available, that so much still needs to be done to prevent disabled people from getting into a tango of death with traffic.

—Conor O'Brien

## We welcome your input

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# Awards recognize Danforth design

By STEVE DARLEY

Community involvement and a well-developed sense of context recently generated positive praise and awards for two local public buildings.

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Toronto Urban Design Awards were celebrated on Monday, Sept. 21. Among the honourees were the Pape Danforth branch of the Toronto Public Library and the Bloorview Kids Rehab hospital.

Both facilities were recognized in the same category: public building in context.

The library received the award of excellence for its renovation, while the hospital received an honourable mention.

For Ann Bailey, director of branch services for Toronto Public Library, dialogue with the local community played an important role in the design process.

"We like to talk to the community before we start work on the plans and what we like to talk about at that point is what kind of library services they want to see in the branch.

Because, really, form follows function," she said. "At Pape Danforth, we had a public meeting and a series of focus groups, where we invited different groups, school age children, seniors and the business community to give us their thoughts."

From those meetings the library, together with architecture firm Hariri Pontarini, came up with a design plan to create a fully accessible and integrated facility with one entrance.

Prior to the renovation, the children's department had a



Observer, Steve Darley

**URBAN DESIGN AWARD:** The Bloorview Kids Rehab building at Bayview and Eglinton received an honourable mention in the 2009 Toronto Urban Design Awards. The distinctive sloping roof was designed in response to community concerns over a full five-storey building. Toronto architects Montgomery Sisam designed the building.

separate entrance and was unable to remain open as long as the main library due to staffing challenges.

The other major renovation requirement was to create an inviting neighbourhood space. Architect David Pontarini, a local resident and library user, led the design team.

"We wanted to make a barrier-free library," he said. "We wanted to create a visual link between inside and outside. We used the copper-clad bay windows to achieve this."

Bailey said both visibility and neighbourhood connectivity are important.

"Our branches are neigh-

bourhood-based. Each branch is unique in its building and the neighbourhood it serves," she said.

"So its ability to fit in with the neighbourhood is very important to us. We try to make our buildings open, welcoming and inviting and part of that is being visible."

The architects moved the entrance from the south to north end of the building and used the existing slope of the street to create a fully accessible entrance.

For Pontarini, these types of "surgical incisions" were critical to maintaining the integrity within the streetscape.

The library was one of very few entrants in the Urban Design Awards to avoid any negative feedback from the judges.

Neighbourhood sensitivity and accessibility were also key design criteria for the Bloorview Kids Rehab hospital.

The facility, located on a ravine in the Bayview Eglinton area, differed from the library project in that it was a new-build project.

Terry Montgomery, principal of Montgomery Sisam Architects, was pleased with the level of community interest from the beginning of the project.

"With this project we were building in a very strong

neighbourhood, so clearly there was going to be a lot of interest in the project," Montgomery said.

"And a lot of concern that it might be a difference to the community, but ultimately you get a better building when you have more input and are satisfying more stakeholders."

One of the main concerns from the local community was the potential height of the building. Initial designs called for a five-storey building; however, this did not sit well with residents.

"It was very challenging for us as our first design was five storeys high on both wings," Montgomery said.

"We decided to make that limitation into an advantage and it allowed us to give the building the curved shape, from five storeys north to two storeys on the south. It became an attractive, iconic part of the building."

Susan Brown, director of academic affairs at Bloorview, emphasized the importance of accessibility in a facility where the average length of stay is two months.

"One of the overarching principles in our project was to engage clients and families in creating a vision of a space that would meet their unique needs and challenges," she said. "We wanted to design a building that was what we call universally accessible."

The Urban Design Award judges were impressed with most aspects of the Bloorview project, particular the vibrancy of the facility overall. The main criticism was levied at the outdoor parking lot.

# Police set up roadblocks for safety checks



Observer, Andrew Gelfand

**ALL BLOCKED UP:** Police closed four out of the six lanes across the Leaside Bridge during a recent safety blitz.

By ANDREW GELFAND

It wasn't long before officers were pulling trucks off the road and yanking licences in an East York-based vehicle safety blitz.

The initiative took place on Thursday, Sept. 17 between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the Leaside Bridge.

Sgt. Jack West was the officer in charge and chose the six-lane bridge specifically for the operation.

"This area gets a lot of through traffic, but it's also wide enough for us to conduct this kind of blitz safely and still allow through traffic," he said.

The safety check was a joint operation involving Toronto police's 54 Division and the provincial ministries of Transportation and the Environment.

The objective was to target unsafe and unlicensed commercial trucks and taxi cabs.

The police began to set up the roadblock around 9 a.m., as employees of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transportation started to unload their tools.

Specifically on the checklist were commercial trucks' air brakes, lights and height and weight requirements.

Trailers were also being checked for functionality, and their loads for stability.

As the first commercial truck entered the safety check, it was quickly pulled off to the side.

"As you see, it doesn't take long," West said, after a brief chat with another officer. "That was a suspended driver in an unsafe vehicle. His plates are going to be removed now and he's going to be charged appropriately."

The second truck through was also impounded due to being unsafe.

Cabs didn't slip by unnoticed, either.

"We're taking a look at cabs specifically because they carry one of our most precious cargos: human life," West said. "Also, being a city big on tourism, the cabs are one of the first things tourists see. They reflect on the city."

Personal cars weren't exempt, being pulled into the check area if they were noticeably damaged or dilapidated.

"We've got life-threatening vehicles out here," West said. "That's what we're trying to prevent."

A total of 138 vehicles were inspected during the blitz, with 48 charges laid between the Highway Traffic and Environmental Protection Acts. Of those, two drivers were found to be driving without proper licences and eight plates were removed.

# Parker says parking still a priority in the city

By SABA TAYE

Rezoning remains a top issue for the Toronto East York community council.

At a meeting on Sept. 15, a representative for Common Element Condominium, a building under construction at Richmond Street and University Avenue, promoted reducing parking spaces in the city.

The new 42-storey condominium and nine townhouses will share a garage with eight parking spaces.

The representative suggested that spaces won't be needed because 25 per cent of people in Toronto don't drive.

East York resident Rick Gomez, 27, agrees. He said that cars are congesting the city.

Gomez believes trains should become the primary form of transportation.

"Travelling was a lot easier. I had more freedom," Gomez, a former resident of New York, said of commuting in that city. "I would jump on the subway

and go anywhere."

However, Ward 26-Don Valley West councillor John Parker said city council doesn't have any plans to reduce parking.

Instead, Parker hopes to see the Leaside Business Park attract new forms of business, similar to the interior designers and software developers it houses now.

To do so, he said, having ample parking for employees is crucial.

"Reducing parking isn't the

goal of any policy initiatives at the moment," Parker said. "For the time being, the idea is that people will get to work in the industrial area by car."

Parker is, however, looking forward to the Toronto Transit City Light Rail Train being built in the northern part of the industrial area.

He said it would make it easier to attract workers and companies into the Leaside Business Park, but he doesn't see it as a primary source of

transportation in East Toronto.

"It'll deliver people right to the doorstep of the industrial park so a lot of people will be able to get off the LRT and walk to their jobs in the northern part of the industrial area," he said.

"It's understood that if we expect the Leaside industrial area to thrive as a place of employment, we're going to have to accommodate parked cars."

The Toronto-East York community council will meet again on Oct. 13.

# East York Garden Club shows off its stems

By FARRAH COLE

Fads are usually reserved for the catwalks of New York or Paris, but flowers and plants are just as much a slave to trends as clothing. While petunias were the dominant flower last year, woody stems and green plants are this year's trend.

"Plants are like clothes," said Betty Hall of the Ontario Horticultural Association. "There are times when certain flowers are more popular than others."

She said access to plants usually determines what trends will be dominant. "What's available in your area usually turns your crank," she said.

Hall was a judge at the last flower show of the year for the East York Garden Club. The show was held on Sept. 17 at the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse.

She said holding these types of shows is symbolic of the changing seasons.

"It's a part of your heritage to show your produce at harvest time," she said.

Hall, a longtime member of the horticultural association, said her favourite part of flower

shows is the judges' choice awards, which include Best Design and Best Cut Specimen.

"You look for one thing you think is outstanding, something that is unexpected," she said. "You're looking for texture, colour and rhythm. You want to see dominance and contrast."

And while she has judged many flower shows, Hall said the experience never gets old.

"For the design (categories), I'm looking at the elements and principles of design," she explained. "Is it creative? Does it have individuality?"

She stressed the importance of inspecting the "horticultural specimens" for uniformity. When you're competing in a category with multiple blooms, matching flowers are everything.

"If there's three (of the same flower), they have to be similar in shape, size and colour," Hall said.

The winners of the flower show will receive points toward the George S. Henry Trophy, which is awarded to the member with the "greenest" thumb and most points. It will be presented at the November meeting.



Observer, Farrah Cole

**WINNER TAKES ALL:** Joyce Crook received the judge's award for "Best Specimen" at the East York Garden Club meeting held on Sept. 17 at the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse — for her rose in water. It was the club's last flower show of the year.

# Group asks world to give Peace Day a chance



Observer, Meghan Housley

**LET PEACE PREVAIL:** Tamara Penn participates in a flag ceremony on International Peace Day, Sept. 21.

By MEGHAN HOUSLEY

Thought is the most powerful energy on earth, according to a local new-age spiritual group.

On Sept. 21 — the International Day of Peace — members of the Universal Light Centre gathered at the East York Civic Centre to think about and pray for world peace.

Freda Kemp co-ordinated the ceremony.

"We really focus on and honour every country," she said. "We are putting that power (of positive thought) into action and helping to create a better world."

In addition to the "Peace Ceremony," the gathering was also an occasion to celebrate the life of Stephen Ginsberg, a peace activist and member of the Universal Light Centre, who

died on Sept. 14 after a two-year battle with cancer.

Lesley Mezei spoke of Ginsberg's contribution to world healing through his "Peace the 21<sup>st</sup>" concept — an opportunity to focus on a "thought image of peace." Ginsberg, Kemp and some of their friends created "Peace the 21<sup>st</sup>" and celebrate it quarterly, on the solstices and equinoxes.

"Stephen had a tireless and relentless vision to end conflict," Mezei said.

The United Nations designated Sept. 21 as the International Day of Peace in 1982. Since then, Kemp said, the holiday has grown to include millions of people around the world in events of all sizes.

East York's Peace Ceremony

was an official International Peace Day event. The ceremony itself involved taking the flag of each country, one at a time in alphabetical order, and asking for peace to prevail there. Then, gathering all the flags together, participants symbolically showed every country standing together for world peace.

Tamara Penn participated in the ceremony and spoke of the importance of asking for an end to conflict in the world.

"It's a very powerful invocation of what we want with humanity and the world," she said. "We really focus on and honour every country, (making it) a really beautiful and powerful ceremony."

The Universal Light Centre is based in Toronto.

# Mambo, anyone? Local seniors love to shake it up at the centre

By GORDON BRUNT

Latin line dancing to the rhythms of salsa, mambo and rumba is a new hobby for 88-year-old Grace Masterton.

Although Masterton has already participated in yoga and Tai Chi classes, she did not have the same confidence for the eight-week Latin line dancing class.

"I'm not very good at it," she said, sharing a laugh with her friend, Pam Grater. "It takes a lot of practice."

Both women are members of the Community Care East York senior centre, located at the rear of the Cosburn United Church on Greenwood Avenue.

Activities such as yoga and Latin line dancing are just some of the classes introduced to the centre since it opened in May 1989.

The senior centre celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the spring. Lois Scott, supervisor, remembers when the doors first opened to East York and the positive response it received.

"There were lots of people in this area looking for a place to come and do things," Scott said. "Having a place to go, whether it's this place or someplace else, is important because they can establish new connections and friends."

According to Scott, there are currently 600 members at the centre but membership is much higher because Vacation Plus, a close partner, has over 400 members who are allowed to participate in programs and trips at the senior centre.

Masterton and Grater, 85, have been taking advantage of the programs at the centre for three and five years, respectively, and have been volunteers at the centre's most popular event, Candy Cane Magic.

Both have expressed their satisfaction with retired life now compared to the traditional idea of retirement.

"We don't sit at home and look at the TV all of the time," Grater said.

"The thing that attracted me

was to meet new people at your own age," Masterton added.

Classes at the centre range from \$12 to \$60 and supply an array of programs from belly dancing to lighter exercise programs such as indoor walking and chair yoga.

Vacation Plus director Marney Bowden is also a fitness instructor and has been teaching classes at the centre for three years.

Some of the classes she teaches may seem like common sense to younger generations but she said that simple exercises to improve a senior's balance can help keep him or her out of danger.

"Even if the fall is not life-threatening, then it can be life-changing. That person may have to rely on others to help get them around and that can have a tremendous effect on their life," she said.

The next big date circled on Masterton and Grater's calendar is Nov. 21, when the centre will host the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of its annual fundraising event, Candy Cane Magic.



Observer, Victoria Wells

**TO THE RESCUE:** Enviro Girl Nicole Stamp takes to the stage to teach kids about ways to save Ontario's greenbelt. TVO Kids' hosted Greenbelt Adventure Day at the Evergreen Brick Works farmers' market on Saturday, Sept. 19.

# Free entry, cheap food draw thousands

By RAHUL GUPTA

The Ontario Science Centre's anniversary celebration allowed children of all ages to rekindle their spark for science.

The East York area landmark celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday, with an all-day bash featuring free admission, discounted food and, of course, birthday cake. Over 15,000 people attended.

From 10 a.m. until closing, patrons could view all exhibits at no charge, enjoy free screenings at the centre's IMAX theatre and purchase food for only 69 cents. In addition, there was a centre-wide scavenger hunt, a magic show and a special game show where participants could compete for prizes by answering food trivia questions.

The festivities kicked off with an opening ceremony featuring speeches from several luminaries invited for the occasion, including the Hon. David C. Onley, lieutenant-governor of Ontario.

Onley recalled how the science centre served as a frequent

source of stories during his days as a television news reporter.

"I can remember countless occasions coming to the science centre because there was an available expert who could talk to the viewers about what was going on," he said. "But there was also something to show the viewers because of the amazing exhibits."

Dr. Dafydd Rhys "Dave" Williams, a retired Canadian astronaut who spent over 687 hours in space, reminisced about how his visits to the centre stirred his scientific imagination.

"Certainly, my favourite part of the science centre was the space exhibit," he said with a wink.

For science centre trustee Mark Cohon, the three visits he makes to the centre each month allow him to get closer to his young daughter, Parker.

"She loves KidSpark," Cohon said, referring to the popular play space for children eight and under. "I'm more partial to some of the sports exhibits."

Cohon, who is also the commissioner of the Canadian Football League, stressed the importance of the science centre for the community of East York.

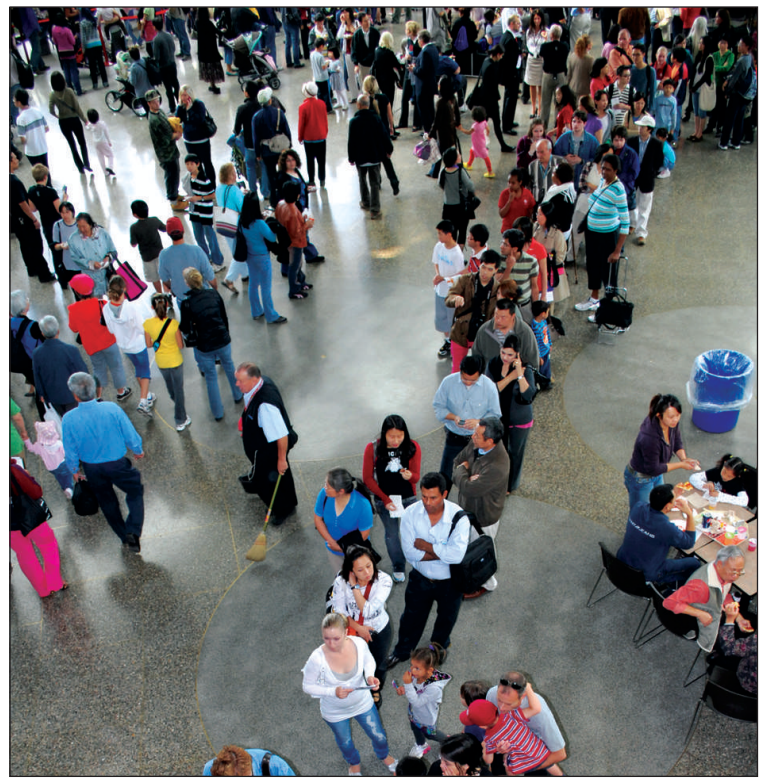
"I think it's unbelievable for (East York)," he said. "We need institutions like the science centre to build community. And this building has built a great community for all of Ontario to enjoy."

Cohon stressed that the science centre wouldn't decamp from its current location near Eglinton Avenue and Don Mills Road anytime soon, despite reports of suggestions to the contrary.

"This is a great building," he said, noting "1.4 million people came through the door this year. Why would we ever want to leave?"

Outside, Amir Abadi, a resident of North York, couldn't help but smile while his young children played in the courtyard.

"It's our first time here," he said. "But we'll definitely be back."



Observer, Rahul Gupta

**ALMOST A RECORD:** 15,279 patrons attended the Ontario Science Centre's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday on Sept. 26, making it the second highest attendance in the East York area landmark's history.



Observer, Monique Plessas

**DOWN AT THE FAIR:** Jason Allies, an East York resident and photographer, displays his photography at the first annual Danforth East Arts Fair. The community was treated to a variety of exhibits ranging from photography to henna design at East Lynn Park on Sept. 19 and 20.

## Art fair fosters sense of community

By MONIQUE PLESSAS

Young and old came out to enjoy the weather and take in beauty in all forms at the first annual Danforth East Arts Fair.

The event, which was organized by the Danforth East Community Association, took place the weekend of Sept. 19-20. More than 35 exhibitors pitched tents and set up displays to showcase their art.

On both sides of the thin cement path running through East Lynn Park near Danforth and Woodbine, photographers, sculptors, painters and many more artists greeted the neighbourhood as hundreds came out to participate.

Jason Allies, an East York

resident and photography exhibitor, says he will gladly be back next year as he's had such a positive experience.

"I've never done this before and when I got here I was a little nervous about setting up but everyone was so helpful and welcoming," he said.

Natasha Cranatstein, chair of the Danforth East Community Association and a resident of the area for six years, says community building is an important goal for the association.

"We want to build a community that is vibrant, walkable and safe because it's great to... live somewhere you feel like you really know your neighbour," she said.

The demographic in East York is changing and events like the arts fair attract young families, as well as long-time residents.

Sean Fitz-Gerald and Caroline Alphonso, new to the area, say they are very happy with their choice to live there.

"We love the neighbourhood," Fitz-Gerald said. "There is such a great sense of community here."

The association will take inventory of the fair's success and decide whether to continue this event annually. Judging from the smiles on the faces of visitors and exhibitors alike, tents and tables will be set up next year for the second annual Danforth East Arts Fair.

## 'Grab and go' breakfast a hit at East York school

By JESSICKA LODUCA

East York Collegiate Institute has given its students something extra to look forward to each morning.

Not only will they fill their minds with knowledge, but thanks to the parent council they will be filling their stomachs as well.

Last year the school started a morning "grab and go" snack program for students. It ensures students receive nutritious meals each morning before class. The program offers healthy alternatives to start mornings off properly, including fresh fruit, milk, cheese and granola bars.

Janet Maxwell, an English teacher at East York Collegiate, says not all students have the privilege of starting off their day with a healthy, nutritious meal.

"Sometimes there's just not enough food at home or they don't have time in the mornings to eat before leaving the house," she said. "For one reason or another, they were unable to have breakfast."

According to Lindsay Tietz, a homeopathic doctor, proper nutrition in the morning is essential for learning. With their stomachs full, students are able to keep an open mind.

"Breakfast can be wonderful or detrimental to students," Tietz said. "Refined sugars are one of the worst things kids can put into their bodies in the morning. Nutritional snacks are the ultimate thing for brain function and energy; it's the difference between having a

spaced-out feeling (and) feeling grounded and focused (when it comes to learning)."

Susan Gucci, co-chair of the parent council and a local realtor, says the program has had positive responses from both parents and students. With student volunteers and the parent council helping dispense snacks to students, it has helped bring the community together.

"The parents have been most supportive, donating their time and money," Gucci said. "It's a great example of a community pulling together in to benefit all. It has been really rewarding to see."

Local businesses, including the Wal-Mart Supercentre on Eglinton Avenue, two Loblaws locations and TD Canada Trust at Woodington and Danforth avenues, are all generous sponsors of the snack program.

Maxwell believes the program will help students achieve greater successes in their studies.

"It takes a lot of persistence to be a student," she said. "These kids are here from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. every day, and if they don't eat properly, their minds cannot stay focused. Getting kids properly fed is just essential for learning."

The morning snack program has generated pleasant results for students, parents and teachers and plans are underway to expand the program later this year.

Interested volunteers and sponsors can contact East York Collegiate at 416-396-2355.

## East York teacher tackling issues facing local TV news

By CONOR O BRIEN

Many local television newsrooms in Canada are in an uproar these days.

It has nothing to do with current events outside their walls — and everything to do with the recession in advertising and changes in the media landscape generally: especially increased competition from more news outlets, like the Internet.

So the Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) hosted a panel discussion at Ryerson University on Sept. 22 to discuss the changes that are taking place, in hopes of finding solutions to keep local television news on the air.

Centennial College's George Hoff, a recent addition to the journalism faculty at the East York campus, produced the

event, which included both journalists and managers from Citytv, CBC, CHCH (Hamilton) and A-Channel (Windsor).

Hoff, chairman of the ethics committee for the RTNDA, said the idea for the discussion, which will be part of a series, is vital for examining issues confronting broadcast journalists.

"We have a station on file support in Windsor, off the air

in Red Deer (Alberta), under tenuous ownership in Victoria (B.C.) and Hamilton, and changing formats in Toronto," Hoff said. "The industry is in a real state of change, so I suggested to the (RTNDA) board that we should invite our members and broadcast journalists in general to discuss the issues that they face. At the end of the day this is a business,

and there needs to be a viable business model to make it work."

Hoff will use the issues discussed and the tentative solutions reached in a new class he's teaching at Centennial.

"In a couple of weeks, I will be starting a multi-platform journalism course," he said.

The course is expected to help students learn to file stories for web, print and broadcast news.

# Why did(n't) the sheep cross the road?



Observer, Meghan Housley

**NEVER TOO EARLY:** Artist Amy Yi Chen shows her young neighbour the other artists' works at the Don Valley Art Club's autumn show. The club, which celebrated its 60th anniversary this past spring, welcomed about 500 art-lovers to the event, held over September's last two weekends.

## Artist answers question with her paint brush

By MEGHAN HOUSLEY

Gerre Virsunen proves that artistic inspiration can come from the strangest places.

On vacation in Newfoundland last year, Virsunen and her husband came across a flock of sheep. While most of the animals moved out of their way, one sheep just stood there with what Virsunen called the most dumbfounded look on its face.

"That sheep was just mesmerizing," she said.

So, she took a picture, and an acrylic rendition of "Beau Sheep" was her entry for the Don Valley Art Club's annual fall show.

Virsunen, who's belonged to the club for over 10 years, said she started painting when a neighbour secretly signed her up. She was visiting her neighbour, admired the artwork in her home, and wistfully told her that she would love to paint.

The next thing she knew, she was attending artists' workshops at the Toronto Brick Works where the club has its

home base.

The Don Valley Art Club, which celebrated its 60th anniversary last spring, exhibits its work at Todmorden Mills on Pottery Road.

The fall art show took place Sept. 18 to 27, welcoming about 500 attendees. Sixty of the club's 170 members exhibited their works, ranging from still life, to abstract, to portrait and even a few Group of Seven-looking landscapes.

At all the club's art shows, it is the artists who put everything together. Virsunen said this makes the club more meaningful.

Amy Yi Chen joined the club in the last year and was working the reception desk on Saturday. She agrees with Virsunen and expressed interest in learning all aspects of the club.

"I want to learn everything," Chen said. "I want the club to be better and have more people involved."

Chen sold her first painting, "Karina," to a man who commented on the portrait to her while she was sitting at reception. He was so delighted meet the artist that he bought it right then and there.

## Passion for canoeing transcends the ages

By VICTORIA WELLS

It was a special moment for canoeing enthusiast George Luste.

After announcing his latest paddling trip at the dinner table one night, he was touched to hear his then 14-year-old daughter offer to accompany him.

"Tija said, 'I'm not very strong, but I'd like to go.' So, the two of us did the trip. (I have some) wonderful memories of canoeing together," he said. "That was really special."

Luste, a physics professor at the University of Toronto and a wilderness devotee, has been paddling across Canada since 1963.

He shared photos and memories of his more than 40 canoe trips at the S. Walter Stewart library on Thursday, Sept. 23. The talk was presented as an event for the Outing Club of East York.

Many of Luste's trips were undertaken with his family in tow, and he said the expeditions gave them a chance to bond.

The family's experience of connecting to each other through the outdoors is one shared by the East York Outing Club.

Lucy Perri, vice-president of the group, said activities such as hiking, cycling, canoeing or skiing are great ways to make social connections. She sees the effects in the members of the club.

"If you go on a trip, everyone looks after each other," Perri said. "There's so much friend-

ship."

In the case of Luste and his family, canoeing trips became an important part of their shared history.

Luste's wife, Linda, was introduced to canoeing by her husband.

She said her family thinks of their trips with great fondness, even though the expeditions weren't always completely pleasant.

"I remember one night with the four kids, I heard, 'Mom, Debbie threw up in the tent!' And then, here I am, cleaning the tent, telling them, 'You have to get back in there. I don't care if it smells!'" she said, laughing.

The Luste children, now grown with kids of their own, fondly remember the ups and downs of the paddling experience.

"Whenever they get together now, (the trips are) what they talk about. It was a nice family experience," she said.

The tradition continues as Luste introduces his grandchildren to canoeing. He takes them on quieter daytrips, such as paddling on Don River.

Canoeing has been a part of Luste's life since he discovered the sport at the age of 23 on his first trip along the Abitibi River to James Bay.

He said he is thankful for finding the sport because of the connections he's made.

"Canoeing has enriched my life," he said. "I've met wonderful people on my trips. I'm very grateful for that."



Observer, Lloyd Quansah

**TREE OF LIFE:** Supporters were on hand to kick start the Shoppers Drug Mart Tree of Life fundraising campaign for women's health charities on Wednesday at the store located at 755 Danforth Ave. From left, Toronto Maple Leafs baseball team pitcher Drew Taylor, deputy Ontario premier George Smitherman and hockey broadcaster Nick Kypreos add their leaves to the tree.

## Pool closure worries trustee

By OMAR MOSLEH

The pool closing at Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute — reaffirmed at last month's board of education meeting — could have a detrimental effect on student populations that need it most, particularly immigrant and special needs students, warns East York trustee Cathy Dandy.

Danforth Tech's pool, built in 1927, was closed because of its severe state of disrepair, and the school couldn't raise the necessary maintenance funds. In addition, administration decided the pool was not essential to its physical education program.

"One of my big issues about Danforth closing is that we have a very high special needs population there, and we have a pretty high percentage of new immigrants coming to that school who know nothing about even

basic water safety," Dandy said.

While providing swimming safety training to special needs children is understandable, some may wonder why it's necessary to teach such skills to immigrant students. Teaching water safety may be a given for most Canadian families, but Dandy said that for many cultures it is a foreign concept.

"There's a couple of stumbling blocks for new immigrants and cultural communities," Dandy said. "For many of these communities, swimming isn't even on their radar as a life skill because of where they're from."

But while students won't learn these skills at Danforth anymore, the community is looking at neighbouring school pools at Monarch Park Collegiate and Queen Alexandra Senior Public School, said Danforth Tech principal David Moore.

"It's not like we have no options at all for the special needs students," Moore said.

According to Rick Daigle, central facilities services manager, the major issues with Danforth Tech's pool were mechanical and infrastructure problems, such as a leaking roof, electrical issues, and malfunctioning equipment.

A new pool supply air fan would have cost \$40,000, and fixing the piping about \$50,000. In total, repair costs tallied \$511,000, which was deemed too much. Leasing the pool to the public wasn't an option due to its disrepair.

Dandy said it could be a while before the full impact of losing the pool is understood.

"Right when we're finally closing some of these pools, we're becoming more aware of the impact on (our students') mental and physical well-being."

## Who let the dogs out?

Cont'd. from page 1

work on whatever that shortfall is to bring the dog back up to standard."

"We train our general patrol dogs to be trained on human scent," Caissie said. "This helps them find suspects who run from

police or in some cases, (to find) missing persons."

The PDS is slowly beginning to outgrow its East York location, its headquarters since 1993. The program hopes to train more dogs, which may make moving necessary in the future.



# Cosburn lawn bowling club wraps up

By IAIN COLPITTS

For Jim Elliot, there's much more that attracts him to lawn bowling than the game itself.

The third year member of the Cosburn Park Lawn Bowling Club plays often because it is very affordable.

"Where else can you pay \$75 and practice whenever you want for a year?" said Elliot.

Now that fall has arrived, the Cosburn Park Lawn Bowling Club gets closer and closer to the end of its season.

The club is celebrating its 80th year of operation and will shut down until next season when it closes after Thanksgiving.

"We have a lot of fun here," said premises chair Keith Park, a member of Cosburn for seven years.

"We've had a lot of people who have been athletic their whole lives, but then come here and say 'I should have been doing this all summer.'"

Cosburn is one of 30 clubs across the Greater Toronto Area and one of 140 affiliated with Ontario Lawn Bowls (OLB). The OLB has 8,300 members across Ontario.

The club has 130 members, including 10 on the executive committee.

Cosburn has had great success attracting new members each year. In 2007, they won the Canadian award for the largest increase in membership and came seventh in 2008.

But after five straight years of gains, membership has gone down this year.

"We brought in about 15 or



**TIME FLIES:** Club members Jack Spears (top) and Eric Brands take part in a 12-end game on a Thursday afternoon. They have been affiliated with the Cosburn Park Lawn Bowling Club for over 25 years.

20 new bowlers, but lost quite a few," Park said. "Some people have moved away or discontinued for other reasons. It hap-

pens, but after five years of gains, we were due."

This season, the club hosted a provincial mixed pair's

championship as well as four district tournaments.

While some members bowl for fun, others have used the

sport as a vehicle for competition.

"I'm very competitive," said Eric Brands, who has been a member for 27 years. "I've bowled in tournaments all over the world in places like England, Portugal, and Wales."

For the most part, the Cosburn club is a place where bowlers can play on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday afternoons with night bowling on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Most of the members are in their late 60's or early 70's. In the past, the club has had younger members in their teenage years, but they have had to move on because of school or summer jobs.

Jack Spears is 86 and bowls at Cosburn most afternoons. He enjoys the social aspect of the club.

"It's a real friendly group in the afternoon," said Spears, a member for 25 years. "Maybe the more zealous bowlers play at night and take it more to heart. We just bowl for the fun of it."

Cosburn also offers open houses throughout the season where anyone with flat-soled shoes can bowl for free.

Aside from lawn bowling, members get together on Friday nights to play cards.

That's not the only time people enjoy themselves at the club.

"Every day is a big party here," said third-year member Lynn Price. "When you've got 130 members and 160 personalities, it's just non-stop fun and games."

Observer, Iain Colpitts

# U.S. college recruiting site catching on in Canada

By IAIN COLPITTS

For Stefan Carty, getting recruited by a U.S. college is no easy task.

Like any high-school athlete aspiring to play at a post-secondary institution, the 17-year-old offensive lineman from Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute will try anything to get noticed.

That's where berecruited.com comes in. More than 200,000 student athletes, 10,000 college coaches, and 5,000 high school or club coaches are currently registered with the website.

There are 832 athletes from Canada using the site.

"You see people from Canada and the United States using it so I just joined up and it has been pretty good so far," said Carty.

He says there has been one hit from the University of Windsor.

"I don't have the best grades in the world, so if football is what I'm going to get into school with, I'll take it."

Through the website, athletes, coaches, and fans can sign up for free and set up a profile.

Students can include athletic and academic information as well as personal information, such as hobbies, coaches names, and desired potential majors. The site also allows athletes to upload video and game film.

"Through the recruiting process, you want your profile to be as personal as it can be because

if you go to college or university, coaches will know everything about you so you may as well be as open and honest as you can," Carty said.

The site is based out of Atlanta, GA and was originally created exclusively for NCAA swimmers and divers, but now serves athletes and coaches from 18 different sports.

"With the economy the way it is, budgets have been severely cut," said berecruited.com president Jeff Cravens. "Berecruited.com gives coaches a national recruiting effort without having to spend money on travelling."

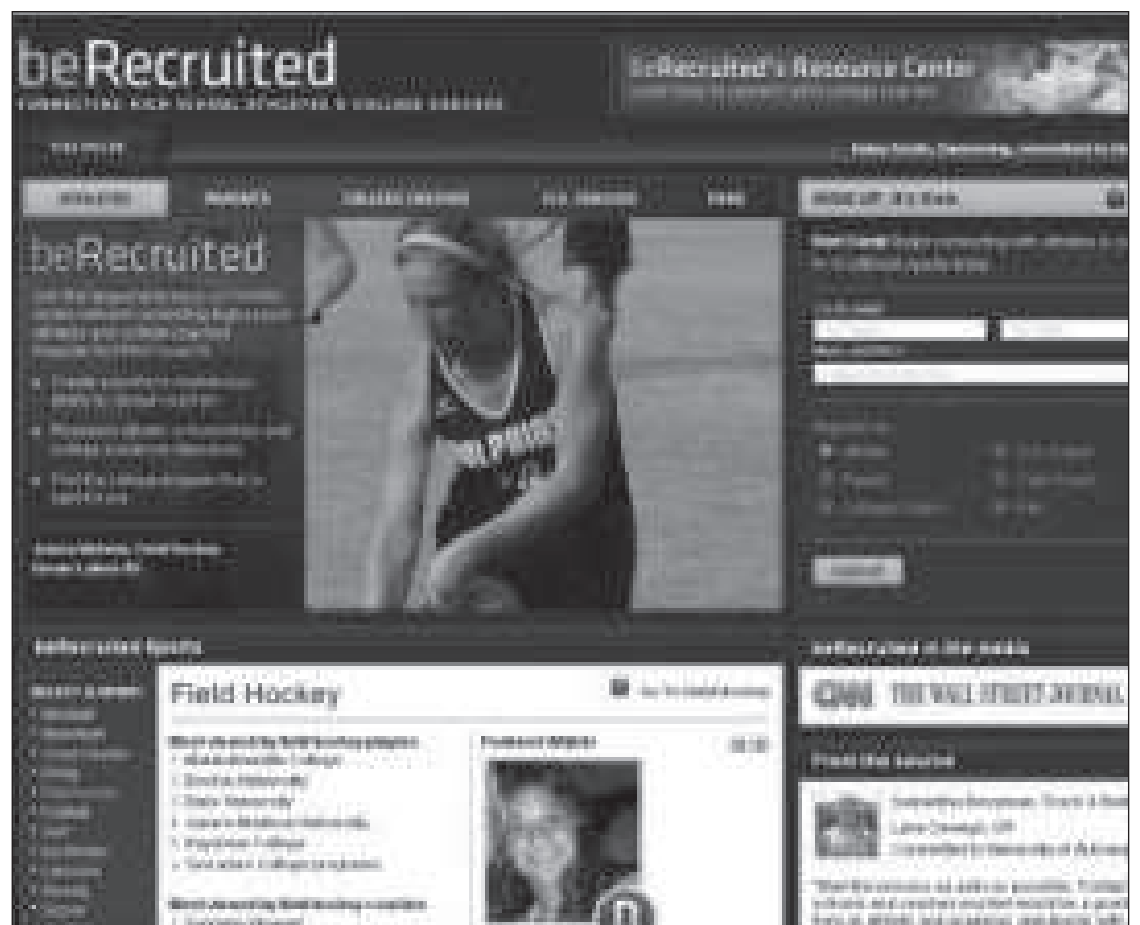
York University football coach Mike McLean began using the site so he could do a better job of targeting prospects.

"It's tough because there are so many kids across the Greater Toronto Area," McLean said. "It's hard to get out and see everybody so we do use the site."

Although the website makes it easier for potential recruits to get noticed, Tom Huisman, director of operations for Canadian Interuniversity Sport believes student athletes can't rely on the website alone.

"Recruiting service companies can provide a valuable service to some extent, but prospective student athletes and their families should exercise their own due diligence and research with respect to options available at the post-secondary level," Huisman said.

McLean agrees that players need to do their homework and



Observer, Iain Colpitts

**CYBERSPACE SHORTCUT?** Above is the home page for berecruited.com, where athletes go to enhance their chances of being recruited by colleges or universities across North America.

talk to graduating players and coaches to see if their skill set fits in with the team's philosophy.

"You can judge a lot by watching the way a player plays to see if they fit into your system," McLean said. "We can

go through any website and find a 6-foot-7-inch, 300 pound offensive tackle, but can they play the team's style?"

"Kids have to do their homework because wherever they decide to go, they'll be spending four years of their lives

there."

For now, Carty will use whatever tools are out there to help him get noticed.

"I love football," Carty said. "It's something I have to work for and put more effort into."

# Chess masters play fast and furious game

By JOHN CHIDLEY-HILL

Every Saturday afternoon some of Canada's best chess players come together on the Danforth to play a version of the game called 'blitz'.

Tournament director Vlad Dobrich started the club in 1963 at the old YMCA on College St., where the Toronto Police Service headquarters now sit.

"I stopped running the tournaments in the 1970s," said Dobrich, a former Canadian chess champion. "But I picked it up again in 2000 at our old location on Bayview Avenue"

Although still called the Bayview Games Club, the tournament has been held weekly at Mom's Café, one block west of the intersection of Danforth Avenue and Greenwood Avenue, for the past six months.

What is most impressive about the participants is they are of such a high-calibre. According to Dobrich, at least 42 of the players who have participated are considered to be International Masters or better.

Fédération Internationale des Échecs, the world governing body, awards the International Master title to players who have earned ratings of 2400 or more, with at least three favourable match-ups against other masters.

A grandmaster is typically rated 2500 points or higher, and is generally considered to be in the top 0.02 per cent of players worldwide. Bobby Fischer, one of the most famous chess masters in history, had a FIDE rating of 2785.

The tournament has also attracted the attention of neighbours, who now regularly attend to watch the games. Tim Liu, the owner of Mom's, is one of the most attentive spectators.

"Before they started playing



Observer, John Chidley-Hill

**CHECK MATE:** International Master Leonid Gerzhoy considers his next chess move as traffic passes by Mom's Cafe on Danforth Avenue.

here, I didn't know how to play chess," said Liu, a recent arrival from Vancouver. "But now that I've seen them play, I've taken up the game myself. I really like it."

Blitz chess is a fast-paced variation where each player has a total of five minutes to play the game. After each move, the participant starts their opponent's clock.

Matches are won by

checkmate, time violation, or by making an illegal move and punching the clock.

With a maximum of five minutes to resolve play, matches can reach a frenzied pitch. For many players, this is a drawing point.

"In this fast-paced kind of life, you don't have time to play serious games," says Dusan Miletic (FIDE rating 2138), who

has played organized chess for 35 years. "When I was younger I played much more serious tournament games."

One of the tournament's regulars is Leonid Gerzhoy (FIDE rating 2500), an International Master who plays in competitive tournaments across Canada. In 2007 he won the Under-20 Canadian championship, adding to his

already impressive resume that includes an Ontario open title.

"[Blitz chess] is fun," said Gerzhoy, who began playing at age seven. "The tournament is over in just a few hours."

Masters and amateurs alike have found a home at Mom's Cafe every Saturday afternoon at 2 p.m., and the tournament has become a touchstone for the Danforth community.

# Coach a model for athletic development

By DOMENIC GRATTA

The East York Gymnastics Club knows the success of future Canadian Olympians depends on the quality of training at the grassroots level.

To that end, in 2001 the club recruited 45-year-old Slava Stynik, a former member of the Soviet Union national gymnastics team.

A native of the Ukraine, Stynik serves as the men's head coach, training young athletes aspiring to succeed at national and provincial competitions.

"First of all I enjoy what I do," said Stynik. "Working as a coach for over 20 years it's always interesting to work with kids and to teach them new skills."

At the Canadian championships in Hamilton this past summer, he helped Team Ontario's Simon Barbosa to capture five medals, including two gold and three silver.

"What I like about the system in Canada is that I can train gymnastics to anyone at any age or any level," Stynik said.

In the former Soviet bloc Stynik recalled the difficulties the average person faced in their attempts to participate in competitive sport.

"I'm sure the situation in the Ukraine has changed,

but during my time it was difficult to receive a high level of training unless you were selected to participate. It was very strict."

The East York Club, founded in 1953, is the longest-running gymnastics organization in Ontario. It has about 3,700 members, 35 per cent of them under the age of five.

Membership at the club has increased dramatically since 1984, when only 42 gymnasts were enrolled. Fast forward to 2009 and that number has doubled.

Club members also compete across Canada and the United States.

Stynik is proud to be part of this great tradition and sees his experience as being beneficial to the club's success.

"My time in Ukraine certainly helped me with the skills I can teach the young kids here in Canada," he said. "I was very impressed with the quality of coaches they have here though and how easy it is to learn gymnastics from them."

Observer, Domenic Gratta

At right, East York coach Slava Stynik, a former Soviet gymnast, puts a student through his paces at the Dohme Avenue club.



# Lancers' defence dominates in opener

Leaside pass rush humbles anemic Huskies

By JIM HUMPHREY

The Leaside Lancers senior football team have served notice they are for real this season.

In a dominant performance on both sides of the ball, the Lancers defeated Humberside Huskies 33-6 in the opener of the Toronto District School Board senior boys football league on Sept. 24.

Leaside needed a good start this year after suffering through a dismal 2008 campaign, only winning once.

Their defence, led by second-year seniors Connor Ryan and Jordan Wright, held Humberside's offence off the score sheet with their lone touchdown coming on defence.

"I thought we had a very strong defensive effort today," said Jim Georgiadis, Lancers head coach. "I really didn't know what to expect from Humberside this year. We just went out there and did the things we worked on in practice."

Ryan was also pleased with how the defence played, but thought the key to the game was how they were able to penetrate the backfield.

"We have to control the line of scrimmage," he said. "If we do that we will be successful. It definitely builds our confidence."

Throughout the game, the Lancers forced the opposing quarterback to make quick



Observer, Jim Humphrey

**THAT'S GONNA HURT:** Leaside Lancer Connor Ryan gets in on a gang tackle during a 33-6 victory over Humberside.

passes, they also sacked him a couple of times, intercepted a pass and forced Humberside to take a safety.

All around it was a dominating performance. Georgiadis

admitted he wasn't sure how the young Lancers squad would handle their first test at the senior level.

"This was a very strong junior team last year," he said. "We

had a lot of guys come up to play senior, so what we have is a very young senior team this year."

Wright says their mentality remains the same every time they step onto the field.

"We are expected to not let the other team score any touchdowns and get our offence on the field as quick as we can," he says. "We do that by stopping the run game and getting inside the pocket to sack the quarterback."

A good problem Leaside has this season is the depth on defence.

"The talent is more spread out throughout the defence and we have a lot more depth, so we aren't just relying on a couple of guys," says Wright.

What helped the Lancers starters stay fresh throughout the game was their depth. Ryan thought if the substitutes can come into the game at different times it helps the first string players to catch their breath.

"When all of our defensive players can get on the field for a couple of plays it is a key to our success," he said. "Everyone got in and everyone played well."

This is both Wright's and Ryan's final year at the East York school. The duo would like to continue their playing days beyond high school, but want to remain focused on the season.

"Most of these guys I have been playing with for four years," said Wright. "If I get the chance to play in university that would be great, but all I am focused on is making some nice hits and have a successful season."

As for Ryan, he just wants to have some fun on the football field.

"I am looking to play in university, but if not I am just out here to have a little fun," he said.

## Danforth back on gridiron after lengthy layoff

By RYAN GLASSMAN

A high school with no football team is something Iain McLeod has never understood.

The former St. Francis Xavier X-Men player, now teaching at Danforth Collegiate and Technical Institute, decided to look into the high school's history last fall to discover why no football program was available.

"Danforth has a very storied history in sports, but football especially, going back to the late 1920s up until 1987 when the last team was here," McLeod said.

As part of its gridiron past, Danforth Collegiate was also home to Canadian football legend Hec Crighton, who coached at the high school during the first half of the 19th century.

"He's a great name in Canadian football and he did a lot of time at Danforth coaching football," McLeod said. "I thought it was a shame to have all that history with no team."

In December, McLeod began discussing the possibility of bringing football back to Danforth with principal David Moore. After reviewing the school's budget and broaching the idea with students, Moore decided to give a thumbs up to

the project, allotting \$20,000 to cover expenses for the first season.

"When the opportunity for a little bit of funding came along and some money we had here at the school, it was a great opportunity," McLeod said. "If you let those opportunities go, they don't often come back. We thought it was good to strike while the iron was hot."

Apparently, a lot of high schools shared in that belief because there will be five new teams this fall.

Along with Danforth, North Albion, C.W. Jeffreys, Lester B. Pearson and a joint team of Eastern Commerce and Monarch Park students will hold teams in the Toronto District Secondary School Athletic Association's Tier Two Varsity Development League.

With those other four new teams now a part of the 10-team league, 15-year-old Emran Kabir believes his Danforth teammates will be able to compete in its inaugural season.

"It lowers the pressure, knowing they're new to it as well," said Kabir, a defensive back.

"Hopefully we'll be at the same level as them and they won't crush us," he said jokingly.

But while games are



Observer, Ryan Glassman

**TALKING TO THE TROOPS:** Danforth Hawks coach Iain McLeod (right) addresses his team following a practice on Sept. 22. The team will open its season on Tuesday, on the road against Lester B. Pearson.

important, McLeod, who will coach the Hawks, preaches he wants to "encourage student athletes to do well in the classroom as well as the football field."

It's a motto East York Goliaths coach Glenn Edwards has lived by since he helped bring back his school's football program in 2003.

"The first message and the only message they get is student achievement," Edwards said. "If they have some difficulty, we have mandatory study hall. We work together with them in regards to course selection. The main focus is doing the right thing and the right thing is

staying in school."

With the Hawks set to open their season on the road Oct. 6 against Lester B. Pearson, McLeod insists it will be a steep learning curve to get his current 51-man roster acclimated to the sport.

"For a lot of our guys football is new to them," McLeod said. "We maybe have five or six guys that have played competitive tackle football. My expectation is the guys learn how to play the game, have fun playing the game and we'll take it from there."

While the coach may have modest expectations, offensive guard Robert Cockfield is

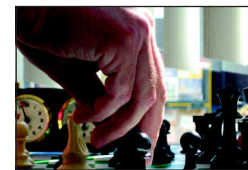
confident the team can deliver results.

"With all this training, we're definitely going to win a couple of games," Cockfield said.

"All the focus, all the yelling, all the pain. It's brutal every day but I like it. It's fun."

Regardless of how the Danforth Hawks season unfolds, one thing is certain: it will be an experience the players will always cherish.

"Not too many people remember getting two extra A's in science class," Kabir said. "But if your friends ask you what you remember the most, these are the things you can talk about."



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Observer, Dan Wilson

**DISHING IT OUT:** Nick Kypreos on-air with HockeyCentral at Noon co-host Daren Millard. Kypreos juggles radio and TV duties with coaching his two sons in the Greater Toronto Hockey League.

## Nick dishes out, and gives right back

By DAN WILSON

Nick Kypreos is best-recognized as one of two things: either a hard-nosed hockey player known for dropping his gloves with anyone willing to fight him, or as an even tougher hockey insider.

What most don't know, is the effort Kypreos puts into giving back to the game as an associate coach on both his sons' Greater Toronto Hockey League teams.

"I'm involved because my children are involved," said Kypreos. "My involvement is based strictly on my background and my experience and just trying to help the kids become better hockey players."

"It's no different than anyone else involved with children. Either you're a parent or a coach or a teacher and it's just watching them progress, watching them get better and hoping to be a small part of that."

Kypreos helps with 10-year-old Zachary's Atom AA Leaside Flames and nine-year-old Theo's Minor Atom A Leaside teams.

Working three days a week at the Fan 590, co-hosting a radio and TV simulcast of HockeyCentral at Noon, and four nights each week for Sportsnet's HockeyCentral, Kypreos often has trouble fitting his coaching duties into his busy schedule.

"Unfortunately," he said, "my attendance is sometimes a little less than 100 per cent, but I still try to give as much as I can. Every day is a juggling act. The good part about me is that I don't follow any particular team, so I'm not on the road a lot. I have a very good job in terms of travel is at a minimum. It enables me to get on the ice probably a lot

more than most broadcasters."

The veteran of eight NHL seasons, with Washington, Hartford, the New York Rangers – where he won a Stanley Cup in 1994 – and Toronto, relishes his role with his boys teams because it gives him an opportunity to give back to a game (Kypreos himself went through the Ontario minor hockey system) that has given him so much.

"I think that when you look at the time commitment and the effort that you have to make, if you're not doing it for that sole purpose of giving back to the community, giving back to the kids, then you're in the wrong business," said Kypreos. "You're in it because your enjoyment is watching kids get better and growing on and off the ice."

"Of course, we're in it to help

**'I think it's great that all kids talk about making the NHL and buying the Ferrari and signing the rich contracts. That's fine, but the reality is that the small percentages really, truly make it.'**

—Nick Kypreos

with the hockey perspective, but hockey is such a great game that it enables you to not only grow as a player, but as a person as well. As a coach, you have to make sure that both sides of that are well-balanced."

His venture into coaching started innocently enough. Kypreos said he was the type of parent that was happy to sit in the corner with his Tim Horton's coffee and enjoy watching his youngsters practise and play.

In due time though, parents

were looking to him to help on the ice and pass along his NHL-calibre skill and knowledge onto the kids.

The only person to object to Kypreos' appointment to duties on the ice and behind the bench was his son Zachary, who, stealing from his father's toolbox, gave Kypreos the occasional two-handed slash to the ankles.

Zachary assumed his father was picking on him anytime Kypreos gave him advice. With the help of another coach, that issue was quickly put to rest.

"The first month and a half, it was a real challenge for him," said Kypreos. "He didn't like it at all. Thankfully, we had another great coach on the ice who would tell him, 'Your dad is your dad and he'll always be your dad, but when he's on the ice, he's no different than any other coach and that you have to treat him like you would all coaches.' It took a while, but he's been great ever since."

Known largely for his grit and toughness, many would be surprised to learn that during his junior hockey days, Kypreos scored 62 goals in 64 games one season.

Because he had to adapt his role in order to earn a consistent roster spot in the NHL, Kypreos may be the perfect mentor for harnessing kids' dreams and aspirations.

"I think mostly it's not getting ahead of yourself," said Kypreos. "I think it's great that all kids talk about making the NHL and buying the Ferrari and signing the rich contracts. That's fine, but the reality is that the small percentages really, truly make it."

"Not that you have to tell a seven-year-old that, but what

you have to tell them is that we are in the here and now and that you have to concentrate on what you're doing today. Tomorrow will take care of itself. I'm living proof of that."

Kypreos also has to worry about his sons feeling they have to follow in his footsteps. He is quick to point out that there is no pressure coming from him, but if his children continue to play at highly competitive levels, the name on the back of their jerseys will garner some added attention.

"I've told my children all the time, because daddy did it or because daddy played in the NHL doesn't mean you have to

do it too," said Kypreos. "You can do anything you want. You have every opportunity to do anything you want. The only thing that mommy and daddy ask is that every time you step on the ice or go into a classroom or go onto a soccer field, that you give it an honest effort and that you just try to be the best that you can be."

After being involved in minor hockey for four years now, Kypreos said the parents and fellow coaches have been great and it has been a wonderful experience for his family.

Perhaps one day, another Kypreos will grace the NHL with the same fire and passion their dad brought to the game.



Courtesy of Toronto Maple Leafs

**A HEAVY HITTER:** When Nick Kypreos played in the National Hockey League, he was known for playing a no-nonsense style of game.